An Introduction to

Smarter
Balanced
Assessment
Consortium

2015 Family Information Session

What is the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)?

- *The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is a state-led consortium working to develop next-generation assessments that measure student progress toward college- and career-readiness.*
- *Smarter Balanced is one of two multistate consortia awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education in 2010 to develop an assessment system aligned to the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) by the 2014-15 school year.*
- *The SBAC is the name commonly given to the summative assessment students take each year.*

Why SBAC?

- New Learning Expectations - Connecticut Core Standards
  - Introduced about 5 years ago
  - Set learning expectations for what students should learn and be able to do at each grade level so that by the time they graduate from high school, they are prepared to succeed in college and careers.
  - Brookfield has been phasing them in over time by revising curriculum, incorporating CCS-aligned resources, and developing new assessments
- New Assessment - SBAC
  - New learning expectations require new ways to measure student progress.

Features of SBAC

- Administered on computers
- Variety of question types in reading comprehension, writing, and math that require students to demonstrate that they truly understand the content
- Performance tasks that ask students to demonstrate an array of research, writing, and problem solving skills
- Computer adaptive technology, which provides more accurate information about student achievement
- Administered online, therefore results of end-of-year assessments are available sooner than in CMT results were in the past

SBAC Terms

- Computer Adaptive Test
- Performance Task
- Claim

Structure of the Test

- Students take tests in two areas:
  - English Language Arts/Literacy
  - Math
- Each area includes Computer Adaptive Test (CAT) items and a Performance Task
- Performance Tasks include a Classroom Activity as well as computer tasks

Computer Adaptive Items

- Assess the full range of CCS in English language arts and mathematics for students in grades 3-8 and 11
- Measure current student achievement and growth across time, showing progress toward college and career readiness
- Include a variety of response types:
  - Multiple choice with one correct response, with multiple correct responses, and with two parts
  - Tables - matching tables, Yes/No or True/False tables, fill-in tables
  - Select or order text or graphics
  - Complex drag and drop
  - Graphing
  - Equation or numeric response
  - Short constructed response
  - Long essay

Performance Tasks

- Collections of questions and activities that are coherently connected to a single theme or scenario
- Require students to apply their knowledge and skills to respond to complex, real-world problems
- Measure capacities such as depth of understanding, research skills, and complex analysis, which cannot be adequately assessed with traditional assessment questions
- Focus on those aspects of the CCSS that rely on research, problem solving, and application and transfer of knowledge, including higher depths of knowledge levels
- Delivered by computer but not computer adaptive
- Require student-initiated planning, management of information/data and ideas, and/or interaction with other materials
- Include both a Classroom Activity and a computer-based task

APPROXIMATE Testing Times

Content Area	Grade	Computer Adaptive Test	Performance Task	Total time on computer	Classroom Activity	Total Time Overall
ELA	3 & 4	1:30	2:00	3:30	:30	4:00
Math	3 & 4	1:30	1:00	2:30	:30	3:00

It is important to remember that the SBAC is not timed. The approximate times listed above are estimates and are applicable to most students. Some students will take longer; others will need less time.

We will create a testing schedule that breaks up the testing time into 45-minute and 60-minute blocks.

Testing Window

- The state's testing window is March 17 - June 12, 2015.

- HHES is anticipating giving the SBAC in May and early June.

English Language Arts/Literacy

The ELA Test assesses reading, writing, listening, and research.

Students will:

- Interact with literary and informational texts
- Write for multiple purposes and to different audiences (i.e. narrative, informational/expository, and opinion/argumentative)
- Write to source materials
- Be expected to accurately use conventions (spelling, grammar, and usage)
- Complete Performance Tasks

ELA Claims

Overall Claim: "Students can demonstrate progress toward college and career readiness in English Language Arts and Literacy."

- Claim 1 Reading: "Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts."

- Claim 2 Writing: "Students can produce effective and well-grounded writing for a range of purposes and audiences."

- Claim 3 Listening: "Students can employ effective listening skills for a range of purposes and audiences."

- Claim 4 Research: "Students can engage in research and inquiry to investigate topics, and to analyze, integrate, and present information."

Mathematics

The Mathematics assessment will reflect the Three Shifts in Mathematics required by the CCS:

- **Focus**: assesses all standards but focuses on the major content in the grade
- **Coherence**: some items may assess one standard but many will assess multiple standards
- **Rigor**: assesses conceptual understanding, procedural skills and fluency, and application of mathematics to solve problems

Complexity versus Difficulty

- All students will see problems across full range of complexity
- Students may see problems of different difficulty based on their responses
- The process is as important as arriving at the correct answer

Mathematics Claims

Overall Claim: "Students can demonstrate progress toward college and career readiness in mathematics."

- Claim 1 Concepts & Procedures: "Students can explain and apply mathematical concepts and interpret and carry out mathematical procedures with precision and fluency."
- Claim 2 Problem Solving: "Students can solve a range of complex well-posed problems in pure and applied mathematics, making productive use of knowledge and problem solving strategies."
- Claim 3 Communicating Reasoning: "Students can clearly and precisely construct viable arguments to support their own reasoning and to critique the reasoning of others."
- Claim 4 Modeling & Data Analysis: "Students can analyze complex, real-world scenarios and can construct and use mathematical models to interpret and solve problems."

Results

- With the new tests, students will receive new scores.
- **Results will be different.**
- In many cases, the scores will appear to be lower on the Smarter Balanced tests than what we are used to seeing on the CMTs.
- This is to be expected because **we are using a different ruler. Comparing scores on CMT to SBAC is like comparing apples to oranges.**
- Given that the ruler is changing, and that the exams are testing different content and skills, we won't be able to compare SBAC scores to CMT scores.

Results - Bottom Line

- In the beginning, fewer students may score at higher levels than we are used to seeing.
- This does not mean that students are learning less. Rather, it reflects that we setting a new baseline from which our students will grow.
- Change is difficult. In the beginning, it might seem that students have a long way to go to reach the new expectations. **But we are committed to working together to support students with great instruction and resources to meet these new expectations.**

Preparing for the Content and Rigor

- All reading, writing, and math curricula have been revised to align with the CCS
- Math unit tests and benchmark assessments mirror the SBAC format
- All students will participate in ELA and Math performance tasks prior to the actual SBAC
- All students are participating in Spontaneous Scrimmages to develop thinking and problem-solving skills
- Teachers are participating in professional development aligned with the CCS and SBAC (e.g., close reading)

Preparing for Technology - Goals

- Students understand and know how to use the universal tools in the test
- Students have the opportunity to practice the technology skills
- Students have experience taking assessments and completing work on the computer

Preparing for the Technology

- Keyboarding practice – special that alternates with library; incorporated into classroom assignments and activities
- List of technology skills required by the test
  - Taught to students and incorporated into classroom activities for practice
  - Reinforced during library and classroom instruction
- SBAC student training modules
  - Overview of SBAC, SBAC tools and screens
- Computer-based assessments (e.g., OLSAT, DRP)
- SBAC Practice test and Training test
- Expanded use of computer-based tools
  - Chrome book apps
  - PEG Write
  - IXL

Supporting Students at Home

- Provide opportunities for your children to practice keyboarding and word processing skills (PEG Write)
- Access the HHES library website
- Reinforce the importance of doing your best and persevering
- Celebrate their accomplishments!
- Do not put undue emphasis on the test
- On testing days, make sure your children:
  - ☐ Get enough sleep the night before
  - ☐ Eat a healthy breakfast
  - ☐ Get to school on time

Resources for Parents/Guardians

- Smarter Balanced website: www.smarterbalanced.org
- Common Core State Standards website: www.corestandards.org
- CT State Dept. of Education website: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2618&q=322592
- PTA website: http://www.pta.org/4446.htm
- Council of the Great City Schools: http://www.cgcs.org
- HHES CCS/SBAC website: https://sites.google.com/a/brookfieldps.org/common-core-state-standards/
- HHES Library website: https://sites.google.com/a/brookfieldps.org/huckleberry-hill-school-library/

Give it a try . . . SBAC Practice Test

- Log into the practice test by going to: https://sbacpt.tds.airast.org/student/
  - First Screen – click "Sign in"
  - Second Screen – select grade
  - Third Screen – select test (Math, Math Performance Task, ELA, ELA Performance Task)
  - Fourth Screen – select settings
  - Fifth Screen – confirm your selections
- Your results will not be recorded
- Important Limitations
  - The Practice Tests provide a preview of the Smarter Balanced assessments, but they do not encompass the full range of content that students will encounter on the SBAC, and should not be used to guide instructional decisions.
  - In addition, students and teachers will not receive reports or scores from the Practice Tests.
  - Although the operational assessment system will be computer adaptive, the Practice Tests follow a fixed-form model.